

## Elizabethan Age Reading Activity

Read the following paragraphs and answer the questions that follow:

The Renaissance spread to England in the mid-1500s. The period was known as the Elizabethan Age, after Queen Elizabeth I. Elizabeth reigned from 1558 to 1603. She was well educated and spoke French, Italian, Latin, and Greek. She also wrote poetry and music. As queen she did much to support the development of English art and literature.

The most famous writer of the Elizabethan Age was William Shakespeare. Many people regard him as the greatest playwright of all time. Shakespeare was born in 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon, a small town about 90 miles northwest of London. By 1592 he was living in London and writing poems and plays, and soon he would be performing at the Globe Theater.

Like many Renaissance writers, Shakespeare revered the classics and drew on them for inspiration and plots. His works display a masterful command of the English language and a deep understanding of human beings. He revealed the souls of men and women through scenes of dramatic conflict. Many of these plays examine human flaws. Shakespeare's most famous plays include the tragedies *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *King Lear*, and the comedies *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Taming of the Shrew*.

1. What was the Renaissance in England known as?
  - A. English Renaissance
  - B. Elizabethan Age
  - C. Shakespearian England
  - D. Elizabeth's Age
  
2. Which of these statements does not indicate the education level of Queen Elizabeth I?
  - A. Elizabeth I reigned from 1558 to 1603
  - B. Elizabeth I was well educated
  - C. Elizabeth I spoke French, Italian, Latin, and Greek
  - D. Elizabeth I wrote poetry and music
  
3. Which of these statements shows that Shakespeare was a great writer?
  - A. Shakespeare was born in 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon
  - B. By 1592 he was living in London and writing poems and plays
  - C. He revealed the souls of men and women through scenes of dramatic conflict
  - D. Shakespeare's most famous plays include the tragedies *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*
  
4. Which of these is not an important fact about Shakespeare's life?
  - A. Shakespeare was born in 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon
  - B. Avon was a small town about 90 miles northwest of London
  - C. Shakespeare revered the classics and drew on them for inspiration and plots
  - D. Many people regard him as the greatest playwright of all time
  
5. Which of these events would come last on a timeline?
  - A. When Shakespeare was living in London
  - B. Shakespeare's birth
  - C. When the Renaissance spread to England
  - D. The end of Elizabeth's reign